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consciously or unconsciously tries to make the debaters his spokesmen; it is at its worst when he is permitted to choose men to act his play. Then instead of a battle of students we may have a battle of coaches. That this insidious sort of professionalism not only degrades debating but clogs it ought to be evident now to East and West alike. Speakers who in contests within the college had shown themselves strong and ready enough to win the coveted places have on the intercollegiate platform been neither strong nor ready; have been, on the contrary, laborious and slow like David in the armor of Saul. The coach's case is of course better than anything they could devise—for him, but not for them. Not only can no man debate another man's case well, but, if he could, he should not. Else college debating will soon be paralyzed. Its main reason for being, its fundamental value in college life, is that it trains men to gain their own insight and impress their own grasp.

Although these cases are drawn from college life, the reasoning holds good for high-school pupils as well. Evidence is not lacking, however, as to similar abuses in coaching for high-school debates. A Sioux City, Iowa, newspaper gives the following report of a speech recently made before an Iowa teachers' convention:

"Interscholastic debates stir up enthusiasm, but they are absolute farces." W. H. Reno, of the high school at Elkader, and coach of his debating team, thus classified all public debates in a talk before the Iowa Teachers' Association:

"The trouble is that we do not debate vital subjects," said Mr. Reno. "When the pupils get upon a platform to debate a subject which their minds cannot grasp and on which their arguments are arranged in conclusive order, they are false to themselves and false to the public. If anybody had sense or half sense they would know that the pupils did not arrange their arguments, but that it was the work of the coach."

In connection with this, it is interesting to note that the debaters whom Mr. Hartwell especially commends for their originality of thought belong to Iowa high schools.

Now when in Maine and in Kansas, in New York and in Iowa and in Wisconsin, we find such perfect concurrence of opinion as to the existing evils of interscholastic debating and the remedies therefor, is it not time, despite the happy experience of Mr. Hartwell, with his two score or more of debates, that some general reform of interscholastic debating be undertaken? Certainly the undeniable merits of high-school debating should neither blind us to its manifest dangers, nor arrest attempts to remedy its defects.

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A CORRECTION

Superintendent Stacey, of Abilene, Kansas, informs me that the control of the schools in the second-class cities of Kansas which are under the commission form of government has not been placed in the hands of one of the commissioners, as was stated in my note in the December *School Review*. The plan was proposed, but was not adopted.

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